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SUBJECT: Bamako Conference on Avian and Pandemic Influenza --
Guinea

REF: STATE 190899

¶1. Per reftel, post is actively engaging the Guinean government on the importance of the upcoming international conference on avian and pandemic influenza in Bamako. Four high-level Guinean delegates will attend the conference -- Dr. Jean Paul Sall, Minister of Agriculture; Dr. Amara Cisse, Minister of Health; Dr. Seny Mane, National Director of Livestock; and Dr. Mahi Barry, National Director of Public Health. We delivered reftel talking points to host government officials.

¶2. Post is an active member of Guinea's national Avian Influenza (AI) task force along with other key donors such as the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization. This working group ensures that Guinea has the necessary information on AI and assists in resource mobilization. Thus far, we have supported a national workshop on AI preparedness and response. This workshop brought together approximately 50 health, agriculture, and livestock officers and NGO representatives.

¶3. The Mission sponsored the participation of three high-level officers from the Ministries of Health and Agriculture to attend an international conference in Geneva. Post also extended technical support, providing 100 sets of personal protective equipment, one lab specimen collection kit, and one decontamination kit. With the support of the U.S. Government, Guinea has developed a national preparedness action plan.

¶4. In order to continue this positive momentum, post will send Mariama Bah, Reproductive Health Specialist from USAID's Office of Health, to the Bamako conference. While there, she will gain additional expertise and interact with Guinea's conference delegates to explore avenues for continued focus and coordination on avian and pandemic influenza.

MCDONALD